



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbf>

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Fire Restrictions to go into Effect on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) July 1, 2013 – Stage 1 fire restrictions will go into effect on the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests at 12:01 a.m. on July 2, 2013. This decision, which was made in coordination with multiple agencies and counties, was prompted by a combination of factors that include rapidly drying vegetation, ongoing drought conditions, growing fire danger, and unfavorable fire weather forecasts.

“Despite improved snowpack and a relatively wet spring, conditions are quickly changing and forest vegetation that was recently green is now at increased risk of burning,” said Phil Cruz, Forest Supervisor for the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland (MBRTB). “Last year all but one of our four large fires was started by lightning; however, even one human-caused fire is too many and we hope to proactively reduce this risk by implementing restrictions that are now warranted.”

Fire restrictions are needed to help protect public safety and natural resources. They primarily limit where and what types of fires are allowed, however, all prohibitions listed below should be noted and followed. Unless noted by an exception, and until restrictions are rescinded, forest visitors **cannot**:

1. Build or maintain a fire, or use charcoal, **except** within permanent fire pits (steel fire rings) or grates provided at Forest Service developed campgrounds or picnic areas. ***Note:** personal and/or homemade fire pits/rings are **not** allowed.

Other **excepted** devices include:

- Portable stoves, lanterns and heating devices that use petroleum fuels such as pressurized liquid gas or propane that can be readily controlled by a valve.
- Fully enclosed woodstoves with a ¼” spark arrester screen.

2. Use explosives. This includes all fireworks, which are always prohibited on National Forest lands, as well as exploding targets used for recreational shooting.

3. Smoke cigarettes, pipes, cigars, etc; **except** within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

4. Operate acetylene or other torch with open flame (includes welding), unless specifically authorized in writing by the Forest Service.

5. Operate internal or external combustion engines (e.g. chainsaws, ATVs, dirtbikes, generators, etc) without a USDA or SAE approved spark arrester properly installed, maintained and in effective working order.

Violation of these regulations is punishable as a class B misdemeanor, by a fine of not more than \$5000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment of not more than 6 months, or both. Anyone responsible for starting a wildland fire could also be held financially liable for fire suppression costs.

At this time, fire restrictions are not in effect on the Thunder Basin National Grassland. Conditions will be monitored throughout the summer to make future decisions on maintaining or rescinding Stage 1 restrictions, or elevating them to Stage 2, which is a complete fire ban.

For more information contact the following Forest Service Offices, go to our website at <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>, or you can follow the MBRTB on Twitter, **@MBRNFsTBNG**.

- Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District, 2171 Highway 130, Saratoga, WY, (307) 326-5258
- Douglas Ranger District, 2250 E. Richards Street, Douglas, WY, (307)358-4690
- Laramie Ranger District, 2468 Jackson Street, Laramie, WY, (307)745-2300
- Hahns Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District, 925 Weiss Drive, Steamboat Springs, CO, (970)870-2299
- Parks Ranger District, 100 Main Street, Walden, CO, (970)723-2700
- Yampa Ranger District, 300 Roselawn Avenue, Yampa, CO, (970)638-4516

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